

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 AF-08

OPIC-03 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /079 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8123

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 5349

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

SUMMARY: ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON GOVERNMENT PROGRAM OPENED AUGUST 5 WITH MILD CRITICISM FROM POPULAR DEMOCRATS AND CENTER DEMOCRATS, SHARPER ATTACKS BY THE COMMUNISTS, AND VICIOUS ASSAULT BY FAR-LEFT UDP DEPUTY. ASSEMBLY ACCEPTANCE OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAM APPEARS ASSURED, AS NEITHER THE PPD NOR CDS IS LIKELY TO SUPPORT A REJECTION MOTION. REMARKS BY COMMUNIST LEADER ALVARO CUNHAL RECOGNIZED THE NEED FOR DRASIC ECONOMIC MEASURES, BUT ASSURED THAT THE COMMUNISTS WOULD OPPOSE MOST MEASURES PROPOSED BY THE GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. COOLNESS FROM CUNHAL: PCP LEADER, WHILE STATING THAT COMM-
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UNISTS WOULD NOT SYSTEMATICALLY OPPOSE THE PROGRAM,

LABELLED IT COMPOSITION AND PROGRAM INADEQUATE IN CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES. HIGHLIGHTS OF CUNHAL'S REMARKS FOLLOW:

-- THE PCP RECOGNIZES SEVERAL POSITIVE IDEAS IN SOARES'S PROGRAM, BUT HAS SERIOUS RESERVATION REGARDING THE GOVERNMENT POSITIONS ON CRUCIAL PROBLEMS;

-- THE GOVERNMENT MUST ASSURE TRUE PLURALISM IN RADIO, TELEVISION, AND PRESS, AND NOT SIMPLY A MEDIA AT THE SERVICE OF THE GOVERNING PARTY;

-- AN END TO IDEOLOGICAL PURGES SHOULD MEAN AN END TO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE COMMUNISTS, BUT NOT THE REINTEGRATION OF "FASCISTS" INTO THE BUREAUCRACY;

-- THE SOLUTION TO NATIONAL PROBLEMS IS POLITICAL, AND NOT MERELY THE APPLICATION OF THE LAW: ANTI-POPULAR MEASURES WILL MEET RESISTANCE;

-- THE PCP IS CONCERNED WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S EMPHASIS ON "WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES: EQUAL EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED UPON COMBATING "ECONOMIC SABOTAGE" AND "IMPERIALIST ECONOMIC PRESSURES;"

-- THE DIFFICULT ECONOMIC SITUATION REQUIRES URGENT MEASURES TO INCREASE PRODUCTION AND REDUCE CONSUMPTION OF LUXRIES BY "PARASITES,"

-- ECONOMIC RECOVERY CANNOT BE ACCOMPLISHED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE POOR THROUGH CONTROLLED WAGES AND PLANNED INFLATION NOR THROUGH CAPITALIST RECOVERY, AS THE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM ENVISAGES;

-- THE REASSUMPTION OF ECONOMIC POWER BY BIG CAPITAL AND LANDOWNERS WOULD PRODUCE SERIOUS REACTIONS;

-- THE PCP IS CONCERNED OVER HOW AGRARIAN REFORM WILL BE APPLIED;

-- GOVERNMENT INTENTION TO SEEK MORE LOANS FROM "IMPERIALIST" COUNTRIES RUNS THE SERIOUS RISK OF MAKING PORTUGAL MORE DEPENDENT AND SUBJECT TO POLITICAL PRESSURES;

-- PRIVILEGED RELATIONS WITH UNITED STATES AND EUROPE WILL REINFORCE PORTUGAL'S DEPENDENCY;

-- PCP DOES NOT ARGUE FOR PORTUGAL TO LEAVE NATO BUT BELIEVES THE NATO BRIGADE IS INOPPORTUNE.

2. MOLD CRITICISM FROM PPD: PPD DEPUTIES MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:
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-- ONLY THE GOVERNMENT, NOT THE ASSEMBLY OR THE PRESIDENT, CAN BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM;

-- GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS IN AREAS OF SOCIAL SECURITY, HEALTH, AND EMIGRATION ARE ACCEPTABLE.

-- PPD AZOREAN LEADER, MOTA AMARAL COMMENTED UPON HIS ARRIVAL IN LISBON THAT AZOREAN AUTHORITIES CONSIDERED THE PS GOVERNMENT PROGRAM QUITE CONSTRUCTIVE. HE SAID THAT

THE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM MERITED THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE PPD IN THE AZORES. HE FORESAW CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE PS GOVERNMENT AND THE PPD REGIONAL GOVERNMENT IN THE AZORES.

3. MILD PRAISE FROM CDS PRESIDENT FREITAS DO AMARAL MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM ARE ITS MODERATION, PRAGMATISM, AND REALISM;
- MANY PROGRAM ELEMENTS ARE DRAWN FROM CDS PROPOSALS;
- PROGRAM DEFECTS OUTWEIGH THE POSITIVE ASPECTS;
- PROGRAM IS TOO VAGUE AND HAS NOT BEEN RELATED TO PROJECT COSTS;
- PROGRAM PRESCRIBES STOPGAP MEASURES NOT A RECOVERY FROM ECONOMIC CRISIS;
- PROGRAM IS INSUFFICIENTLY SPECIFIC ON THE FOLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR;

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5. PS APPEARS CONFIDENT: SOCIALIST PARTY DEPUTIES SALGADO ZENHA AND ANTONIO REIS DEFENDED THE SOCIALIST PROGRAM BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY. REIS SAID THAT THE PS PROGRAM HAD NOT CHANGED, BUT THAT THE PROPOSALS OF OTHER PARTIES IN THE ASSEMBLY HAD MOVED CLOSER TO THE CONSTITUTION.

UDP STILL SEEKING VILLIANS:
FAR LEFT UDP DEPUTY ACACIO BARREIROS
TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE TELEVISED ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS
TO LAUNCH A VICIOUS ATTACK ON THE SOCIALIST PROGRAM,
NATO, AND THE UNITED STATES. AFTER BARREIROS HAD
REFERRED TO AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI AS "A BANDIT" AND A "CIA
OPERATIVE," WHICH DREW MURMURS OF DISSENT FROM THE
DEPUTIES, BARREIROS WAS WARNED BY THE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT
THAT HE WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE IF HE MADE FURTHER
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REFERENCES TO REPRESENTATIVES OF COUNTRIES WITH WHOM PORTUGAL MAINTAINS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. WHILE BARREIROS SAVED SOME HARSH WORDS FOR THE "REVISIONIST" CUNHAL AND THE PCP, THE UDP DELEGATE DIRECTED MOST OF HIS ATTACKS UPON HIS MOST POWERFUL ENEMY OF THE MOMENT: THE SOARES GOVERNMENT AND THE WEST.

6. COMMENT: AFTER FIRST DAY'S DEBATE, APPROVAL OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAM SEEMS ASSURED. CDS AND PPD ARE REASONABLY SATISFIED WITH THE SOCIALIST PROGRAM. PPD DEPUTY FLOOR LEADER CHARACTERIZED THE SOARES PROGRAM TO EMBOFF AS EXTREMELY MODERATE. THE PPD AND CDS ARE ASSIDUOUSLY READING ALL FAULTS THEY FIND INTO THE RECORD, AND ARE CAREFULLY DISASSOCIATING THEM-SELVES FROM ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROGRAM. BTU NEITHER PARTY WILL PROPOSE A MOTION TO REJECT THE PS PROGRAM, AND NEITHER IS LIKELY TO SUPPORT SUCH A MOTION. MOTA AMARAL'S COMMENTS ON FUTURE AZOREAN-PS GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, REFLECT CONSIDERABLY MORE OPTIMISM THAN MANY OF HIS PPD COLLEAGUES IN THE AZORES.

7. THE COMMUNISTS DIRECTED HARSH CRITICISM AND SEVERAL WARNINGS TO THE SOCIALISTS. CUNHAL'S REACTION WAS MILDER THAN MANY EXPECTED, CONSIDERING THE CONTENT OF THE PROGRAM. BUT WHILE THE PCP READILY ACCEPTS THE NEED FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY, THE COMMUNISTS ARE LIKELY TO OPPOSE MOST GOVERNMENT MEASURES. WHILE THE SINGLE UDP DEPUTY IS AN ABERRATION WITHIN THE ASSEMBLY, HIS REMARKS ARE A REMINDER THAT THE U.S. REMAINS A TARGET.

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